

A
 REVIEW
 OF THE
 STATE
 OF THE
 BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, August 13. 1709.

A Man in his Senses would think, the worst natur'd Wretch in the Town could hardly find out an Argument to make Use of, against collecting Charity for the poor Strangers now among us—

But when it comes to the Point, how lamely, how baldly do some come off of it—I'll give them nothing, says Mr. Deputy *Save-all*, the . . . Maker, for I do not know upon what DESIGN they are come hither.

Why, really Good man Deputy is in the right, if he understood, what he himself meant by the Word DESIGN; for if these People came over with a *Design* in that Gentleman's learned Sense, *then indeed*, He and the rest of the Gentlemen of the like Magnitude of Understanding might have

some Reason to be cautious and close-fisted to them— But, *in order to treat this Jest in more earnest than it deserves*, I shall take a little Notice of the Thing call'd DESIGN, as this Gentleman means it, and as it is apply'd to these poor Peoples coming over, which is as much to the Honour of this Nation, as if they had been all persecuted for Conscience.

Some People would pretend to be surpriz'd, when they hear, that these People are not come over hither for Religion, that they are not persecuted Protestants fled from the Cruelty of the Papists— They thought, all People that fled hither for Relief, must have persecuted; and if they had been such, *Oh, what would they have done for them?*

them! But as for these People, they know not what to make of them; and as Mr. *Wou'd-be-Alderman* says, they don't know what the DESIGN of them was in coming over hither.

But are there no Causes in the World, that make People fly from their Habitations but Religion? Tyranny is equally inconsistent with the Ease and Possibility of Living, whether it be *Religious* or *Civil* Tyranny; and People fly from the Impositions of their Task-masters, whether it be on their Liberties or their Consciences—The *Israelites* came out from *Egypt*, not from the Idolatry of the *Egyptians*, but from their Bondage. Thus the *Flemings*, that came over hither in *Q. Elizabeth's* Time, and to whom we owe the Skill in and Application to our Woollen Manufacture—fled from the Cruelty of the *D. of Alva*, as well as from the Inquisition—And therefore when they took Arms at first in the *Low Countries*, from which War the Establishment of the Dutch as a free People took its Birth—their first Ensigns had the Bible, and the Tenth-Penny for their Device; the one showing they fought for their Consciences, the other for their Liberties.

Liberty is the next valuable Interest in the World to Religion; Tyranny will make a People fly from their Country, and quit their Habitations, as well as Persecution—And either of these Causes entitles the People to your Hospitality, Kindness, and Charity—and more especially, for that you have found Occasion many Times in *England*, *ay and yet more in Scotland*, to fly away from both.

Nor is it a little Honour to the *British* Nation, but especially to our Constitution and to our Queen—as the *Author of the Daily-Courant* has very happily observ'd, That we are the Refuge now of the oppress'd Nations of *Europe*; whether their Oppressions are of one Sort or other, whether they fly for Conscience Sake or for Liberty Sake—their Eyes are cast hither; here is an open Sanctuary for all the Miserable—Here Liberty reigns, perfect Freedom is the Peculiar of the Country; every Man has a clear Title to, and an undisturb'd Possession of every Thing he honestly gains—and this will

make all the World fly to you, if they can—The Name of *Britain* will occur to all the People of *Europe*, when their Tyrannical Rulers ravage and crush them—Here they can rest from Tyranny, and be secure from the Harpies of the World—who rob Men by Divine Right, and endeavour to put the Sanction of Heaven's Authority, upon the Depredations and Violences they offer to their Fellow Creatures—as if GOD had originally appointed voracious Men, who cannot govern their own Lusts, to govern his other Creatures, and legitimated their horrid Actions, by obliging Mankind to subject themselves to those Vices, which he that made them will punish.

Britain shall now be honour'd from Heaven with being the Refuge of those unhappy Creatures who shall fly, as being invaded by the Fury of Tyrants, and having no Power to act, what GOD in Nature dictates to them in like Case, are forc'd to abandon their native Country, in Quest of a Life more eligible to Human Nature than that of Bondage and Slavery, which Mankind by Nature abhors—There is indeed a Possibility of Mankind's being so entirely suppress'd, their native Spirit crush'd and cow'd, and their very Thought made so abject and base, as to have no Taste of Liberty, no Desire to be free; the native Principle born with every Creature, I mean Love of Liberty, by meer Disuse, and the Ignorance of a better State, seems extinct; all the Fire of the Soul seems quench'd, and the Creature perfectly dispirited, acts the meer Tribe of *Issachar*, is born for Bondage, and lives only like an Ass-Couchant. I am sorry to say, we have some of this Spirit yet left among us, and I wish there were less of it among our poor People in *Scotland*, who, if they had but a Taste of that Liberty, which our *Southern* Commons enjoy, wou'd soon depose the Petty-Tyranny of the Masters and Lairds, the Gentry and Nobility, and banish that scandalous Vassalage, that keeps them poor, dejected, miserable, and unable to act towards their own Prosperity. But this by the way; 'tis a long Subject, and what I reserve to very be large and every plain upon in its more proper Season.

What

What I am now upon, is this——The poor People we are now speaking of, to the Honour of *Britain*, and to the particular Reputation of the present Reign, are come over hither for Liberty—To say they were Beggars, and are come over for Bread, is to say nothing. They were a flourishing People, they come not from barren Mountains, unhealthful Climates, or a poor uncultivated Country—The *Palatinate* is known to be one of the finest, most fruitful, rich, pleasant, and healthful Countries in *Europe*—The Land rich, Provisions plentiful, full of great Cities and Trading Towns, full of People, full of Commerce, and full of Manufactures—The *Rhine* runs thro' it, the *Main* and the *Nekar* traverse and encompass it; three Rivers, the Navigation whereof brings great Trade, and consequently Wealth to the Inhabitants; they send yearly great Quantities of Corn, and Wine, and Cattle into other Countries. The Plains and Dales are fill'd with Corn, the Hills cover'd with Vines, and the whole Country allow'd to be of the most pleasant and most fruitful Part of *Germany*.

It is evident they do not come, because their Country won't keep them, or the Earth supply their Families with Necessaries—But they are ravag'd by Enemies, they are the Frontier of this bloody War, the *French* have frequently plunder'd their Country, burnt their Cities and Towns, and almost every Year exacted Contributions from them, with the utmost Rigour—This has impoverish'd them—discourag'd them, and made them unable to pay the heavy Taxes, their own Prince exacts—So that between the Rapine of the Enemy, and the Imposts and Exactions of their own Sovereign, the poor People have been ruin'd, their Labour devour'd, their Properties taken from them by Violence, and they are oppress'd and devour'd with unsufferable Injuries.

From these Distresses, they look abroad for an *Asylum*, a Place of Rest, a Land where Liberty is establish'd, and Property secur'd; where what their Industry has gain'd, the Government will permit them to enjoy, where they may reap what they sow, and eat what they earn—where they may call

their Souls their own, and may not starve in the midst of Plenty——And this, they have been told, is to be obtain'd in *England*, above all the Nations of *Europe*——And to this End they fly hither——

This is the true Genuine and only DESIGN of their Coming; and if Mr. Deputy pleases, he may be easie, the poor People have no other DESIGN than this, in their coming over; if his Worship knows of any other DESIGN, he would be very kind to tell it.

But having thus clear'd up the poor Peoples Design in coming hither; let us enquire a little into the Design of these wise Gentlemen, in cavilling, raising Scruples, suggesting Designs, and such Whims as these, upon the poor People at this time. Truly, their DESIGN is evident, and a base DESIGN it is; only, that being resolv'd to give nothing to them in the Collection now in hand, or so little as they would be asham'd their Neighbours should talk of, to excuse their scandalous Parsimony and Want of Charity, they would load the poor innocent People with some Reproach, if possible, as a Reason for their closing their Hand, when indeed it is nothing but meer Covetousness, and withholding their Hands from their Necessities.

And now, Mr. Deputy, if this be the Reason, why you were pleas'd to give them but 2s. 6d. in the late Collection, when your Neighbours, who you would hardly set with the Dogs of your Flock, gave 10s. and 20s. a Man. I would humbly desire you to talk no more of it—but if possible be honest, and confess, that your Pride and Luxury so out-run your Charity, that you had at any time rather spend 20s. to make your Neighbours drunk, and be so your self, than give 10s. to save a poor Stranger ready to perish from starving.

This would lead me to give the same Person a Hint, if he please to take it, how cheerfully and with what Satisfaction he has gone to the Church-wardens Dinner in his Parish, where they have feasted themselves out of the Stock levy'd in the Parish for the Poor, not at all examining who was starving for Want of the Money, or for what Use it was collected——And if the
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